

COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST PLAN  
DIGEST  
FOREST PLAN AMENDMENT #18  
January 2004

Forest Plan amendments are numbered consecutively. Check the last transmittal to see if this amendment is in sequence. If it is not please contact the Supervisor's Office, Land management Planning to obtain the missing amendment.

Page Number	Superseded (Number of Sheets)	New
51-2 through 51-3	1	1

Digest:

51-3      Add the Peaks Ranger District section of the Arizona Trail and update other Ranger District names

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Forest Supervisor

**Program**

**Components Activities Standards and Guidelines**

**GROUND-DISTURBING ACTIVITIES**

A2

A02

Surface land management decisions include consideration of potential impacts to all cave resources.

Any management activity planned near or within a known cave area is examined for its potential impacts to caves and karst features. This includes activities which might increase sedimentation, sterilize soil, change a cave's natural hydrology or water quality, add nutrients or other chemicals (including pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers), or modify the cave. Cave entrances and karst features are also not used as disposal sites for slash, waste rock or fill materials, and other refuse.

Maintenance of cave microclimate, hydrology, and entrance vegetation is needed in order to protect long-term cave ecology. In general, during project planning evaluate at least a 300 foot radius around cave entrances, in feeder drainages, and surface areas immediately over cave passages for the effect on cave resources.

Generally, major alterations to caves are not permitted. Following an excavation to locate an unknown cave, the condition of the original opening is mimicked so that air flow and wildlife use is not altered and the surface visual resource is maintained. Requests to locate caves using special excavation techniques (explosives, heavy machinery, removing large volumes of earth) are analyzed and considered on a case-by-case basis in compliance with the Archeological Protection Act and NEPA.

Caves of high resource values, and a suitable buffer area of approximately 1/4 mile from known cave passages, may be recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry.

Controlled source seismic surveys requiring explosives or other disruptive techniques are not conducted over or close enough to known caves to create unnatural disturbances.

Drilling is not allowed over known caves or within a suitable buffer. No sediments from erosion of access roads and drilling sites is allowed to wash or be discharged into caves or karst features. If previously undiscovered caves are encountered above the zone of saturation for the regional aquifer during drilling operations, reasonable precautions are taken to protect the cave. This includes sealing the casing above and below the cave to prevent air flow and water leakage.

**Program**

**Components Activities Standards and Guidelines**

A2            A02            Pursue instream flow rights when existing rights are lacking or inadequate in order to protect recreation interests.

Special Designations

A01            Review and update implementation schedules for formally designated areas during the planning period, such as Wilson Mountain National Recreation Trail and the Verde Wild and Scenic River.

**The Arizona Trail is a state-wide trail of which a portion traverses the Coconino National Forest. The trail goes from the north end of the Peaks Ranger District to the Mogollon Rim on the Mogollon Rim Ranger District.** This Trail will be a non-motorized pathway. The route will use public lands to ensure public access; use existing trails, where use of the trails as part of the Arizona Trail does not cause substantial negative impacts; allow day-long, weekend, or week-long travel segments; accommodate hikers, equestrians, cross-country skiers, and back-country bicyclists where physically possible and where management permits; provide representation of the various life zones, geologic features, native vegetation, wildlife, cultural resources, and resource management practices of the Coconino National Forest; be in harmony with other federal, state, and local government entities, and private landowners; and allow for continued production of outputs from forest resources as stated in the Forest Land Management Plan. **The Forest Plan identifies a corridor, with the final trail location, design, construction, and signing to be accomplished by Forest staff and private sector/volunteer partnerships.**

Cultural Resources

Consult with Native Americans when projects and activities are planned in sites or areas of known religious or cultural importance.

Make boughs and herbaceous plant parts used for Native American religious and ceremonial purposes available under conditions and procedures that minimize restrictions, consistent with laws, regulations, and agreements with Tribes. The written authorization to the Hopi Tribe for gathering without specific individual permits is an example. This authorization does not include such items as firewood removed from the Forest or Kiva logs, which do require a permit.

The Forest complies with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in decisions involving interactions between cultural and other resources. Cultural resources are managed in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Plan (SHPO). Until evaluated, the minimal level of management for all sites is avoidance and protection.

Specific Standards and Guidelines derived from the settlement agreement for the Save the Jemez lawsuit are subject to adjustment, should that agreement be modified. In that event an amendment to the Forest Plan will be issued.